

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

VOL. XXXV

JULY-AUGUST, 1926

No. 2-3

Publication office Concord, N. H. Monthly, except August: 50 cents a year. Single copy, 5 cents

Check, post-office order, or stamps should be sent to the Cheerful Letter Exchange, 16 Beacon St., Boston, Mass.

Entered as second-class matter at the post-office at Concord, N. H.

"Acceptance for mailing at the special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917,
authorized July 17, 1922."

A QUIET HOUR WITH HENRY VAN DYKE

WHERE you find a flower, you know there
must have been a seed. Where you find a river,
you know there must be a spring. Where you
see a flame, you know there must be a fire. Where
you find a man beloved and blessed of God, you
know there must be faith. Whether it is
recorded or not, whether you can see it or not,
it must be there, germ of his virtue, fountain-
head of his goodness, living source of warmth
and light; for without faith it is impossible to
please God.

* * * * *

Jesus wrote not with a pen upon enduring
parchment, nor with a stylus upon imperishable
brass:

"He stooped
And wrote upon the unrecording ground."

He would not leave even a single line of manu-
script where His followers could preserve it with
literal reverence and worship it as a sacred
relic. He chose to inscribe His teaching upon
no other leaves than those which are folded
within the human soul. He chose to trust His
words to the faithful keeping of memory and
love; and He said of them, with sublime con-
fidence, that they should never pass away. He
chose that the truth which He declared and the
life which He lived should never be divided, but
that they should go down together through
the ages.

* * * * *

Grant us the knowledge that we need
To solve the questions of the mind;
Light Thou our candle while we read,
And keep our hearts from going blind;
Enlarge our vision to behold
The wonders Thou has wrought of old;
Reveal Thyself in every law,
And gild the towers of truth with holy awe.

"A man's life consisteth not in the abundance
of the things which he possesseth." The land
of wealth is not the empire of peace. Joy is not
bounded on the north by poverty, on the east
by obscurity, on the west by simplicity, and on
the south by servitude. It runs far over these
borders on every side. The lowliest, plainest,
narrowest life may be the sweetest.

* * * * *

"Born within a lowly stable, where the cattle
round Me stood,
Trained a carpenter in Nazareth, I have toiled,
and found it good.

"They who tread the path of labour follow where
My feet have trod;
They who work without complaining do the
holy will of God.

"Where the many toil together, there am I
among My own;
Where the tired workman sleepeth, there am
I with him alone."

* * * * *

We must get back from the confusions of
theology to the simplicity that is in Christ. We
must see clearly that our central message is not
the gospel of a system but the gospel of a Person.
We must hold fast the true humanity of Jesus in
order that we may know what is meant by His
true divinity. We must recognize His supreme
authority in the interpretation of the Bible
itself. We must accept His revelations of human
liberty and divine sovereignty. Above all, we
must accept His great truth of election to service
as our only salvation from the curse of sin,
which is selfishness.

A dumb love is acceptable only from the lower animals. God has given us speech that we should call upon His name. Worship is to religion what fragrance is to the flower. . . . Be not ashamed to bow your knees where men can see you. Be not ashamed to sing His praise where men can hear you. There is nothing that can become you so much as to speak well of your heavenly Father.

* * * * *

Every meadow and every woodland is a college, and every city square is full of teachers. Do you know how the stream flows, how the kingfisher poises above it, how the trout swims in it, how the ferns uncurl along its banks? Do you know the structural aspect of man's temples and palaces and bridges, of nature's mountains and trees and flowers? Do you know the tones and accents of human speech, the songs of birds, the voices of the forests and the sea? If not, you need creative culture to make you a sensitive possessor of the beauty of the world.

* * * * *

We long to leave something behind us which shall last, some influence of good which shall be transmitted through our children, some impress of character or action which shall endure and perpetuate itself. There is only one way in which we can do this, only one way in which our lives can receive any lasting beauty and dignity; and that is by being taken up into the great plan of God. Then the fragments of broken glass glow with an immortal meaning in the design of His grand mosaic. Then our work is established, because it becomes part of His work.

* * * * *

These are the gifts I ask
Of thee, Spirit serene:
Strength for the daily task,
Courage to face the road,

Good cheer to help me bear the traveller's load,
And for the hours of rest that come between,
An inward joy in all things heard and seen.

HIS TWO AIMS

"UNSELFISH work, work that brings no cash return is what the country needs more than anything else," a Cleveland philanthropist recently said in an address. "We are all too mercenary here. I once said to a little newsboy, 'Have you any aim in life?'"

"'Yes, sir. I have two aims,' he replied.

"'What are they, my son?'"

"'The first is to become a millionaire.'

"'Ah! And the second?'"

"'The second is to become a multi-millionaire.'"

WISHING

Do you wish the world were better?

Let me tell you what to do;

Set a watch upon your actions,

Keep them always straight and true;

Rid your mind of selfish motives;

Let your thoughts be clean and high.

You can make a little Eden

Of the sphere you occupy.

Do you wish the world were wiser?

Well, suppose you make a start,

By accumulating wisdom

In the scrapbook of your heart:

Do not waste one page on folly;

Live to learn, and learn to live.

If you want to give men knowledge

You must get it, ere you give.

Do you wish the world were happy?

Then remember day by day

Just to scatter seeds of kindness

As you pass along the way;

For the pleasures of the many

May be oftentimes traced to one,

As the hand that plants an acorn

Shelters armies from the sun.

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

FICTION WE REMEMBER

THE RIGHT OF WAY

By Gilbert Parker

ITS full and somewhat cumbersome title is "The Right of Way: being the Story of Charley Steele and Another." It is one of the best of Sir Gilbert Parker's earlier romantic novels, its scene and people being in and of the Canada he knows so well. Incident and sensation crowd its pages in abundance, involving largely the fortunes of a Montreal lawyer, a man of brains and eloquence whose paths through life and his profession are made devious and arduous by his fondness for liquor and the boon companionship it brings. He is a favorite type of character with Sir Gilbert Parker, and he is usually drawn by him with an unerring hand.

One of the most notable and interesting episodes in the story is the account of the new life led by the hero, who for a time lost his memory through an accident. Into the story come also the life and the primitive people who dwell in an obscure and secluded French Canadian village. "The Right of Way" was published in 1901, and in a successful dramatic version it for a time attracted considerable attention on the stage.—*Transcript*.

THE ETERNAL GOODNESS

O FRIENDS! with whom my feet have trod
The quiet aisle of prayer,
Glad witness to your zeal for God
And love of man I bear.

More than your schoolmen teach, within
Myself, alas! I know:
Too dark ye cannot paint the sin,
Too small the merit show.

I bow my forehead to the dusk,
I veil mine eyes for shame,
And urge, in trembling self-distrust,
A prayer without a claim.

I see the wrong that round me lies,
I feel the guilt within;
I hear, with groans and travail-cries,
The world confess its sin.

Yet, in the maddening maze of things,
And tossed by storm and flood,
To one fixed trust my spirit clings;
I know that God is good!

Not mine to look where cherubim
And seraphs may not see,
But nothing can be good in Him
Which evil is in me.

The wrong that pains my soul below
I dare not throne above,
I know not of His hate,—I know
His goodness and His love.

I dimly guess from blessings known
Of greater out of sight,
And, with the chastened Psalmist, own
His judgments too are right.

I long for household voices gone,
For vanished smiles I long,
But God hath led my dear ones on,
And He can do no wrong.

I know not what the future hath
Of marvel or surprise,
Assured alone that life and death
His mercy underlies.

And if my heart and flesh are weak
To bear an untried pain,
The bruised reed He will not break,
But strengthen and sustain.

No offering of my own I have,
Nor works my faith to prove;
I can but give the gifts He gave
And plead His love for love.

And so beside the Silent Sea
I wait the muffled oar;
No harm from Him can come to me,
On ocean or on shore.

I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care.

And Thou, O Lord! by whom are seen
Thy creatures as they be,
Forgive me if too close I lean
My human heart on Thee!

—John Greenleaf Whittier.

A HANDKERCHIEF FACTORY

ONLY ONE OF THE INDUSTRY IN NEW ENGLAND
IS AT ALFRED, MAINE

THE town of Alfred has the distinction of being the only town or city in New England to boast of a handkerchief factory. It had the honor of being the only place in the section to have an embroidery plant. The Klauber embroidery mill at Alfred has been remodelled into a plant for the manufacture of handkerchiefs, embroidered novelties, and art laces, under the names of the Maine-Kerchief Company. The company is using all Maine raw materials when obtainable, and is employing over thirty people.

The various operations used in the manufacture of the different articles are very novel, but none, perhaps, as much so as that in the manufacture of embroidered novelties. The machines have the appearance of giant sewing machines, ten yards long and ten feet high, containing over seven hundred needles and bobbins at one time, and capable of embroidering twenty yards of cloth in fifteen minutes. The machines run automatically and the patterns of the designs are on rolls resembling very much the roll of a player-piano. A watcher keeps on duty looking for broken threads and is able to thread a needle while the machine is in motion.

The owners of the plant are using Maine-made materials and by-products when they are able to get them, and are placing all their paper boxes, of which they use large quantities, in the state, in the hope of having their finished products as near Maine-made as it is possible to do. In their small way they are adding credit to Maine-made goods and its industry.—*From the Kennebec Journal.*

It is by coming to God every day, trusting in Him, leaning on His help, believing in His providence, conversing with Him in prayer, that we come to be at last as certain of God's presence and love as of our own existence.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. Henry R. Austin, 100 Elm Ave., Wollaston, Mass.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card asking "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Austin, saying that you have sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send those to the Book Club to be printed here.

SPECIAL NOTICES

It will greatly aid those who are sending books, magazines, cards, and so forth, if all our correspondents who send requests for their children will take pains to mention their names and ages. Lacking such information, one is likely to make mistakes; for a boy of twelve and a girl of seven are not usually interested in the same things.

When requesting books for the first time, correspondents should always give, as reference, the name and address of their clergyman.

When correspondents move to a new address, notice should be sent either to our headquarters, 16 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., or to those persons who have been sending books and magazines.

It is necessary to state positively that the Cheerful Letter Exchange is not a "clothing bureau" and not a "charitable" society in the usual sense of the word. We do not undertake to send correspondents money, clothing or household goods. Letters asking for that sort of assistance cannot receive attention. Letters not signed cannot be printed.

Many people do care for just the kind of friendly service for which we are organized. We limit our efforts to them and their wishes.

Those who enjoy receiving books and magazines are asked to remember that they, in their turn, can give much pleasure if they will take pains to write to the persons who send such reading matter. In cases where no word of response goes back—not even to say that the books or magazines were received—senders may suppose the parcels were not welcome. Let us each do our share.

Only books of an instructive or wholesomely amusing character should be offered. Classics, educational works, and standard novels and magazines are always acceptable.

There is a large call for scraps of calico, gingham, and percale for patchwork.

1. Mrs. N. L. Gillis, Stovall, N. C., would appreciate any kind of good reading, especially "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch."

2. Ina Jones of Callaway, Va., R. 2, Box 63, is a little eleven-year-old girl who lost her mother when she was seven and now lives with her grandparents. She would be very grateful if someone would send her a Fifth Reader, also "St. Elmo."

3. My mother and I live in the country on rented land, and we get very lonesome. My father is dead, and my mother is not very strong. We would appreciate books and reading matter of any kind suitable for myself or mother. We would also be glad to receive a copy of the *Cheerful Letter*. For my reference write to Rev. R. A. May, Clifton, N. C. Yours truly, (Miss) Flossie Gambill, Helton, N. C.

4. I wish to thank my unknown friend for the package of magazines that I have just received, also the kind thought enclosed therein. How much truth there is in those few pretty lines:

"Little deeds of kindness,
Little words of love,
Make this world an Eden,
Like the heavens above."

I appreciate all the kindness from each and every one, and enjoy my reading matter very much. Very truly, Mrs. J. A. Lewis, Williamsburg, Va.

5. I am the mother of three children, a boy named H. F., aged 6; a girl named Evelyn Marie, aged 3; and a baby named Geraldine, aged nine months. My husband is working for wages; work is scarce at present. I would appreciate cards for the children. I get very lonesome. I will be 26 years old the 20th of May. My old address, when I last wrote to the *Cheerful Letter*, was Tolbert, R. 3, and then I moved to Vernon, R. 2. My present address is Iowa Park, R. 2, Texas, care of J. M. Green. Mrs. Nora Frank.

6. I wish to thank all you kind people who have remembered us with books, magazines, etc., for we could not make out if it were not for so

much kindness. I have been paralyzed from the waist down since 1907, and have a sister that hasn't been to the table to eat for more than twelve years. We are living with our mother, aged 74, who is very poor, so you may be sure we appreciate any token of kindness shown us. Hoping to hear from any friends that wish to write, I am, your shut-in friend, Moses T. Hall, Dodson, Va.

7. A friend gave me a copy of the *Cheerful Letter* booklet. I am a poor woman and am not able to subscribe to papers and magazines. I don't get a copy of any paper whatever. I should be glad to get reading matter of any kind, also quilt scraps, if that is not asking too much. I certainly would appreciate it. I am a member of the Presbyterian Church. We have no Presbyterian Church or minister in my neighborhood now, but you can write the postmaster at Critz, Va., for reference. Thanking you kindly, Mrs. W. S. Jamerson, Stella, Va.

8. I want to thank one and all for the cheer you have given me and my little ones. Since writing you last I have lost my oldest girl, from lung trouble. Oh, how we miss her! She was my only help, as my others are quite small, and my own health is so poor I can't do much. Now, dear friends, I wish very much for you to send cards and pictures, or some amusements for my twin girls, aged 9 years, and my other two, a girl aged 6, and my baby boy, who will be 3 in July. Yours sincerely, Mrs. Josh Little, Ansonville, N. C.

9. I would appreciate reading matter for myself and story books for my three children. I am not well, and not able to work in the fields. We live on a farm. We have twins, a boy and a girl aged nine, and the baby boy of four years. I attend the Baptist Church. My pastor's name is Rev. Joel Tyson, Cheraw, S. C. Mrs. J. T. Broadaway, Polkton, N. C., R. 3.

10. I am a reader of the *Cheerful Letter* and if I am not asking too much I would like to receive embroidery thread of any color and kind, and also quilt scraps and odd ends for embroidering. I am the mother of two little girls, one 26 months old, and the other one month old. I have to stay in most of the time to take care of them, so I would enjoy anything of this kind to help me pass the time away. I live 50 miles from the railroad. For reference I give Rev. E. J. Waddle, Copeland, Ark. Cheerfully yours, Mrs. A. L. Pack, Rupert, Ark.

11. I shall be so thankful if you will print my letter. I have been weak for years, and have six children. Our baby is two years old. I shall be so glad to get anything suitable for the children, also anything to piece quilts which will be lots of pleasure and help to me. Thanking you

many times, your friend, Mrs. J. W. Thompson, Sturgills, N. C.

12. I am writing you in regard to some good reading material,—any kind of good novels, magazines, or papers of any kind. I would be glad to get any good reading to pass away the time. I am a member of the M. B. Church and will send you for reference, Rev. J. A. Davis. Obligated. (Mrs.) Nola Coldiron, Eldreth, N. C.

13. I received some books and magazines from the *Cheerful Letter* about seven years ago, which I appreciated very much. I am a school-teacher, and would appreciate story books, pictures, cards, magazines, and anything for small pupils. Anything would be appreciated. Mrs. Bessie Moore, Lawsonville, N. C.

14. I am a farmer's wife with five children. We live in the mountains a long ways from town, church, or any kind of entertainments. I would like so much to receive reading for myself, either books or magazines, and reading for a boy of 16, a girl of 14, and a boy of 9 years. And I would like quilt scraps for patchwork, if it is not asking too much. Would be glad to pay postage on them. Mrs. J. C. Henderson, Scotland, Ark.

15. I am twelve years old and live a long way from school and church, and as we have no near neighbors I get lonesome and I would like to correspond with some girl about my age. Someone has been sending me the "Beacon," and I like it very much, for I am very fond of reading, and do not have much money to spend on reading matter. I am very fond of Susan Coolidge's books. Sincerely, Helen M. Hicks, Amherst, Va., Route 3.

16. I have been told about your Exchange, and I wish to make a request and have my name put on the list. First, I will tell you about myself. I am an old lady, living by myself; I make my own living, mostly. My health isn't good and my eyes are weak. I cannot see to read magazines, but I would like cards views to look at, also scraps I could make into quilts, as that is principally my means of livelihood. I have been a member of the Baptist Church for 40 years. I am 68 years old. I get to church seldom, as it is too far to walk, and I haven't any way to go, only when some of my neighbors take me. I am just getting over the flu, have been down two months, but I am thankful to be able to walk about the house once more. For reference, I shall give you the name of my pastor, Rev. Peter Via, Critz, Va. Thanking you in advance, Mrs. P. A. Bingham, Stella, Va.

A Correction

The address of Mrs. Minnie Wilkey of Dayton, Tenn., is R. 3, Box 52, instead of R. 4, as printed in the May magazine.

Change of Address

Mrs. Eula Smith, from Sunset, Texas, to Bowie, Texas.

NOTICE: No attention will be paid to applications written in lead pencil, unsigned applications, or those without a reference.

FAT

ALICE, aged twelve, was fat. Not just plump, or well-filled out, but honestly, generously, largely, tremendously fat.

As a result "little" Alice, as she was still called by her mother, was most unmercifully "kidded" by her schoolmates, and had she not possessed that great gift of good nature which seems to be nature's compensation to those to whom all food sticks, she would have been very unhappy.

She stood it pretty well, however, until one day a school entertainment was given, in which one of her mates stuffed one of Alice's dresses with excelsior and wore it as a sort of parody or caricature of Alice.

That was a little too much! She didn't mind being ridiculed in private, but on the school stage . . . well, she went home crying.

Her teacher was much upset by it, and gave the class a lecture. Then, as a subject for a composition, she gave "Why I Envy Alice," and commanded every one to write. Alice, convinced there was no malice in the amusement which had been had at her expense, was persuaded to award the prize for the best composition.

The reasons given for envying Alice were many and varied. "Because she is so good natured; because she is so pretty; because she gets her lessons; because she is so friendly; because she doesn't mind us when we make fun of her; because she enjoys her food more than I do; because she doesn't hurt herself when she falls down; because she has an extra large desk and chair;" these and a dozen others brought Alice more comfort, in showing her that her mates found much about her to admire.

But the one she awarded the prize to was a classic, and Alice enjoyed it to the full. It read: "Because when she has a good time there is so much of her to have it."

If after kirk ye bide a wee,
There's some wad like to speak to ye.
If after kirk ye rise and flee,
We'll all seem cold and stiff to ye
The one that's in the seat with ye
Is stranger here than ye, maybe,
All here hae got their fears and cares;
Add you your soul unto our prayers.
Be thou our angel unawares.

HE KNEW HIS BUSINESS

THE engineer in charge of the machinery at a Mechanics' Fair in a large city had taught his boy the way to stop and start the engine.

The boy was one day standing by it, when a gentleman came up to him and said:

"You seem to be a pretty small boy to run such a big engine."

"I suppose I am pretty small," replied the boy, "but I can do it all right."

"You think you understand your business?" continued the visitor.

"Yes, sir, I do."

"Can you start the engine?"

"I can."

"Let's see you start it."

The boy opened the valve and the fly-wheel slowly started to revolve.

"You really can do it, can't you?" said the visitor.

"Yes, sir," modestly answered the boy.

"Can you make it go backward?" asked the man.

"Backward or forward; it doesn't make any difference to me," replied the young engineer.

"Let me see you run it backward."

The boy stopped the engine and quickly reversed it, so it ran in an opposite direction.

"Well, I declare, my boy, you seem to understand your business perfectly."

The boy said nothing for a moment, but eyed the stranger suspiciously. Suddenly an idea appeared to strike him, and he said:

"May I ask what your business is?"

"Why, certainly. I am a minister of the gospel."

"Where do you reside?"

"Oh, right across the river here, in Cambridge!"

"Do you understand your business?" further questioned the youngster.

"I believe I do," replied the minister, good-naturedly.

"Can you repeat the Lord's Prayer?"

"Why, certainly!"

"Say it for me," requested the boy.

The clergyman did so.

"You really do know how, don't you?" laughingly said the little engineer.

"Why, of course I do! I repeat it several times a day."

"Well, now, say it backward. You know I ran the engine backward for you."

The clergyman, after a moment's hesitation, said he could not do it.

"You can't do it!" said the little fellow. "Well, you see, I understand my business a great deal better than you do yours."

The clergyman appeared to think so, and retired.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY
OF THE
CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE
1925-1926

It is again the privilege of the secretary of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to present her annual report. The eight regular meetings in Boston, from October to May inclusive, have been held under unusual difficulties. The sale of the building at 25 Beacon Street made October 2, 1925, the last time that the Exchange was able to meet in dear, familiar Channing Hall. The hospitality offered by Bulfinch Place Church enabled the gatherings to continue without interruption. After some bewildering experiences members learned the proximity of Bulfinch Place and Bowdoin Square. The exceedingly severe storms and cold of the winter necessarily kept many of the faithful at home, while numerous cases of serious and prolonged illness among chairmen and their families had the same effect. Nevertheless, the average attendance at these meetings has been forty. The largest number present was fifty-one in October, and the smallest, eighteen, in February, when your secretary was unable to reach Boston, because a blizzard had disrupted the train service. Sixty different Branches have been represented at least once. A member from San Francisco, who came to the October meeting, traveled the greatest distance.

Our beloved chairman, Mrs. William B. Nichols, has been able to preside at only five meetings. During her severe and protracted illness, Miss Edith L. Jones served in her place as chairman in a capable, efficient manner. It is impossible for your secretary to tell how much Mrs. Nichols' inspiring and gracious personality was missed. Her absence acted as a stimulus to stir chairmen forward to stronger endeavor that the greatest year of achievement yet might express their tribute to her. The ovation, which she received upon her return to the Exchange in April, was symbolic of the esteem in which she is held.

This year the custom of opening the monthly meetings with a brief devotional service has been adopted to the satisfaction of all, who find these five quiet minutes of worship a fitting beginning for the hour and a half to be spent in planning service for others.

The Exchange has had the pleasure of hearing several outside speakers through the year. In February Miss Elizabeth Ross, field secretary of the Hindman Settlement School in Kentucky, delighted the group with her charming personality and fascinating Southern accent. Her story of the growth of the school from its humble beginnings in 1902, when its two founders lived in a tent or "cloth house," as the natives called it,

among skeptical, disinterested, and even inimical mountaineers, to the present time, when the school numbers 238 students, 105 of whom are boarding pupils, was like a fairy tale. Illiteracy has diminished in its vicinity from 70 per cent of the population to less than 10 per cent. The Fireside Department has taught the girls weaving, sewing, and the domestic arts, while the boys learn to make all sorts of furniture. Students are trained in farming and gardening. As a result they return to their mountain homes and greatly raise their standard of living, although very primitive conditions still prevail in many places and the windowless, one-room cabin, housing a whole family, is not yet unknown. Our Library Department has sent substantial additions to the library at Hindman.

In March Mrs. Damon spoke to the Exchange about the school at Shelter Neck, dear to Unitarian hearts, and bemoaned the conditions which made its permanent closing this spring necessary. Miss Stella Beard, chairman of the Alliance Committee on Southern Work, then outlined the optimistic plans which her Central Committee has for concentrating its efforts upon the *one* Southern school at Swansboro.

In April Mr. Holtzclaw told of his work as principal of Utica Institute in Mississippi. Situated in the Black Belt of the South, where negroes outnumber the whites four to one, it fills a most important need. Like many other Southern schools, it suffered a great loss by fire, when its library of 10,000 volumes was totally destroyed. Mr. Holtzclaw expressed his appreciation of the help which the Library Department of the Cheerful Letter Exchange had given him in partially replacing this precious library.

After reading the annual report of Mrs. Harry A. Stevens, the chairman of your Library Committee, your secretary is more than ever impressed by the scope of her work. The coöperation of 49 Alliance Branches from seven different states has added 6,100 books to those already in circulation. This is a gratifying number, when the increase of postal rates is considered. Of the 30 new libraries placed this year, 24 are either in schools or housed with school authorities. It is a conservative estimate that 25,000 books are being circulated through your 161 Cheerful Letter libraries. The above number of libraries after some losses by fire, reclassification and the correction of an error in last year's total stands correct to date. Your libraries are functioning all over your broad country in Montana, in Idaho, in Kansas, in the South, on the coast of Maine, and traveling in New Hampshire.

The following extracts from Mrs. Stevens' own report will make you all realize more fully than ever what a tremendous labor is hers but what remarkable results follow it:

"Hardly had the ink dried on the pen which

wrote 1925's annual report, when an offer came of several hundred books, which were sent to replenish libraries during May and June. Thus this committee's activity was continued in the summer without thought of vacation. With the opening of the fall term many requests came from far-away schools for help in supplementary reading. Each year the educational possibilities of this department increase and we shall continue to enlarge this side of our work.

"A call from a county superintendent of schools in Arkansas included the following appeal: 'The need is great. There is no place to buy books, even if there was money to buy them with. So we turn to you Cheerful Letter friends for help. If you cannot aid us, the children must do without.'

"A request came from a North Carolina school principal, who was living in a house where one of our Cheerful Letter libraries was being cared for. He was so impressed with the value of the books and derived such keen enjoyment from them himself that he asked if help could not be given to his own community, which is located in a small county, where there is not a mile of railroad nor any surfaced roads within ten miles of his home. There is, however, a consolidated school within this territory. After investigation Brockton Branch sent him a wonderful collection of books and magazines—the only Cheerful Letter library in that county.

"A school in King's Creek, N.C., has won a prize of ten dollars, offered by the county to the school in which each pupil from the second grade up had read at least six books. Not only the children but the parents also read the books, supplied by Cheerful Letter friends. One book, 'One Hundred Bible Stories,' has been read by every pupil above the fourth grade. The school supervisor says, 'Oh, I wish I could thank every one of the good people who sent these books.'

"We have been able to place two hundred books from the collection of a retiring Unitarian minister with a minister of our own fellowship in one of the Southern States.

"No call, however slight, which has come to us from our own state has been ignored. Nearby hospitals, havens, social service centres, and sanitariums have been supplied with reading.

"Through the friendly coöperation of the Massachusetts Bible Society it has been possible to send many *new* Bibles. Besides those contained in libraries, 69 Bibles have been sent to individuals, and two Sunday School teachers have received *new* Testaments for each pupil, donated by the Massachusetts Bible Society.

"The following quotation from the letter of one of our librarians is typical: 'It seems to me that supplying good reading matter to people who need it is much more important than giving them food or clothing, or in fact almost any other be-

nevolent work. Poor people will always manage to get the necessities but will skimp on reading matter, and until they are given a taste of *good* reading, as we were, they do not even realize they are missing anything, and so the higher ideals and broader outlook on life that they might have had are forever denied them. So I say, God bless the work of the Cheerful Letter Exchange!'

"In closing I wish to extend to the chairmen my appreciation of their faithful coöperation. After all, this report is made possible by their work and willingness to report to me. I am but the clearing house. Let us not forget our obligation to these unseen friends, whose lives we help, pledging ourselves anew to be the 'Friendly Visitor,' thus carrying forward this great missionary work of the Alliance, regardless of Race, Creed, or Color."

Another department of which the Exchange is justly proud is the Home Study. Mrs. George A. Sands, its chairman, has on her list the names of eighty students, who are doing systematic work. Many others occasionally receive cards, clippings, reading, and advice of an educational nature. Mrs. Sands reports the distribution of 770 books; 700 of these were sent directly by her. If her work is to grow at the same rate next year, it will be imperative that most of the books be sent directly by local committees, so that the work and expense of the Central Committee may be lessened. She cannot continue to give her valuable time to the merely mechanical side of the work.

Mrs. Sands herself says: "Modern Geographies and Dictionaries are books of which the supply is always inadequate. Books on Weaving, Sewing and the Practical Arts are constantly in demand. A satisfactory new plan has been the sending of children's books to be read by a family or group and then passed on. Some especially nice editions of "Robinson Crusoe," "King of the Golden River," etc., and some very beautiful Readers have been circulated among twelve different sets of children. It is hoped that we may soon have collections of books for older children and p rhaps for adults. Many teachers would welcome some good professional books, which they would gladly exchange with others.

"English is the subject most in demand in our correspondence work; 45 pupils take English in one form or another. To keep a younger child interested, a worth-while picture is often sent him and he is asked to write a story about it. With practice his response grows from the first halting sentence to a fluent paragraph. Not only Language and Spelling but much of Geography, History, and Art is taught in this way.

"The outline courses in Junior and Advanced English, conducted by experienced teachers, are very popular. This systematic teaching is the

greatest advance made in Home Study methods the past year. Your chairman hopes to offer similar courses in United States History and First-Year High School subjects in the fall.

"The work with mothers and children has been on the same lines as before.

"Our students vary from the child of eight, who does very simple work, to the man of seventy, who enjoys his Latin and Algebra, with all kinds of pupils between. The youth, who with the help of the Home Study and Library Committees is working for his whole community, the mother studying over cross-word puzzles with her son, the woman preparing to pass examinations for college, the boy struggling to keep up with his class, while working on the farm, are types of those whom we are helping.

"May our resources so increase that we may give this particular service to all who need and desire it."

Miss Edith L. Jones reports that the sunshine bags have again made it possible to publish *The Cheerful Letter* without a deficit. This is a real triumph, for the additional pages of the enlarged magazine increased the expense of publication considerably. It was necessary to pay your new editor, who has managed the publication admirably, a larger sum than last year. As the Exchange has voted to continue the magazine in its present size, still more money must be collected to pay for it. All chairmen may well take a lesson from Mrs. Brush of All Souls Church, New York, who again leads in the sum of money turned in from the yellow bags.

If you chairmen carry home to your Branches only one thought from this meeting, let it be the necessity for the support of *The Cheerful Letter*, your official organ, without which the Exchange could not exist. Every Branch chairman in order to keep in touch with the work and to provide correspondents for her helpers *must* take it; every Alliance president *ought* to take it. Persuade Branch members to subscribe by stimulating their interest in it by placing sample copies in the church rack, as various chairmen have done. Encourage your Alliance to pay for subscriptions to be sent to those on the list, who want to read it but cannot afford it. Some Branches subscribe for as many as thirty copies. Stress the fact that the subscription rates remain unchanged, although the expense of mailing the paper has greatly increased.

Also boom the sunshine bags. Pass the bag at meetings as frequently as is tactful. The Hingham chairman this year made a quantity of little yellow bags, which she gave to individuals and groups at the first Alliance meeting in the fall. When they were returned in April, the sum of money which they contained was very gratifying.

Mrs. Henry R. Austin of Wollaston has taken some of the routine work from Mrs. Nichols by

assuming the management of the Book and Magazine Club, which runs very smoothly in her efficient hands.

In April your secretary sent to all Cheerful Letter chairmen listed in the Manual requests for annual reports: 130 answers were received. At this time she learned of the death of two of your fellow chairmen, Mrs. Lloyd Perkins of Middleboro, Massachusetts, and Mrs. George Kent of Lynchburg, Virginia, whose names are held in grateful memory.

It would be most helpful to incorporate in this report the conscientious detail which these various reports contained, but time will not permit. Many of them commenced with the wish that "more could have been done." While every one believes in the motto, "Summa Petamus," many of the chairmen are very modest people, who deery their attainments. To obtain a fair idea of the number of tangible things sent to correspondents is very difficult, for some chairmen give tabulated and itemized accounts, while others refer vaguely and largely to boxes and barrels of magazines or books, rolls of papers, or numerous packages of scraps. Without doubt many chairmen who sent in no annual reports have been working faithfully, too.

Again All Souls Church, New York, leads in the total number of articles sent, with First Congregational, Providence, in second place, Needham, Massachusetts, in the third place, and Newport, Rhode Island, in the fourth. The aggregate of magazines sent by all those reporting was 41,287, and of bundles of patchwork scraps was 1,294. Some unusually thoughtful contributions were made, as, for example, 160 stamped new picture postcards sent by Belmont for the use of patients in the Cambridge Tuberculosis Hospital, paper dress patterns and wall paper sent South by Brookline First Parish, and paper white narcissus bulbs sent by Jamaica Plain to a correspondent, who wrote, "You gave us weeks of pleasure, watching them growing and blooming." More magazines than ever are being sent directly from the publishers. With the increase in postal rates the cost of mailing such by individuals is so prohibitive that in some cases Southern recipients have protested against Northern friends' spending so much money. The unfortunate result is that many people in isolated communities, hungry for reading, receive it in smaller quantities because chairmen cannot afford to send it liberally. As the chairman from Portland, Maine, writes, "The increase in postage does make a difference in the number of books and heavy packages I send. I wish the Government could get the money in a different way." Many magazines are circulated near home, as, for example, 4,000 have been distributed by San Francisco Branch to worthy institutions in that city.

As ever, Cheerful Letter workers have made

Christmas the occasion of extending special cheer to their less fortunate friends. Who can measure the joy which a box of gifts brings to a school of Southern children, who have never seen a Christmas tree, and whose teacher has painstakingly procured and trimmed one? As such a teacher wrote in the latter part of January, "Every day the children still say something about their 'Hingham presents.' They did enjoy them so much. They had never had a treat of any kind at Christmas before."

The box described thus by the Quincy chairman is typical—"All the Christmas presents were done up as attractively as possible, with tissue paper and ribbon, each having a card or sticker with the name of the person on each one to make it personal. For one pathetic case, where there are five elderly people in one house, two having been bedridden for years, I put in five bags of hard candy with the other gifts. The reply came back, 'We enjoyed the candy and appreciated it all more than words can tell. If it hadn't been for you, we shouldn't have had any Christmas.' Another donor, describing a box of new toys which she sent, concluded fervently, 'Blessed be Woolworth's.'"

The hearts of many chairmen are touched by the tokens of appreciation, which they at Yule Tide receive from their correspondents. Boxes of Southern greens, nuts, homemade food, and bits of needlework and crochet find their way North. The North Andover chairman received for her holiday dinner one of the turkeys which she had seen feeding on a North Carolina mountainside, when she had had a most satisfying visit with her correspondents the previous summer. Another correspondent sent a dear picture of her two small boys. She apologized for not having removed a tiny spot, which showed on a small white shoe, and further said that she did not dare to have her own picture taken lest she "should break the *camery*."

Many workers ask for advice as to how to obtain the necessary money for postage, etc. Every Alliance Branch ought to appropriate money for the purpose. Most of them do; some give as generously as \$100 a year. But when funds are low and calls are many, the chairman must frequently depend upon her own efforts. The following suggestion comes from the Wollaston chairman:—"We started our year with an empty treasury. All our committee work was financed by the money received from luncheons served on our meeting days. I asked ladies to volunteer to act as hostesses in their homes, having a different hostess and assistant at each meeting. These two shared the burden of the expense and work of the luncheon and turned the proceeds into the treasury for the work. We earned about \$45.00 in this manner." Some committees hold bridge parties, candy and food

sales. All Souls Church, New York, obtains fine response to the printed appeal sent on postcards to all church members in November. Another committee has found that a collection taken at a November Alliance meeting for the Christmas boxes always turns out well, as no one likes to think of little children unremembered at that time. Every chairman is wise to appoint two or three people on her committee, who will be generous in paying their own postage. She knows from past experience that she must turn freely to her own pocketbook often.

In order to obtain individual contributions, ask for them at regular Alliance meetings. One chairman, without a single, suitable book on hand in October, announced that her Branch was to start a Cheerful Letter Library that year. Within three months one hundred excellent books were sent South. This same chairman never has any difficulty in obtaining the books, cards, pictures, or magazines that she wants, for the following reasons,—she has no false modesty about begging for a worthy cause, she never refuses to accept anything no matter how unlikely, for she knows that usable things will predominate and that the other sort may be disposed of through other channels, and she is always ready to go in her automobile to collect from people who are willing to give but who would never bother to deliver.

This year's annual reports show the usual diversity in methods. Some work alone and others have large committees—many bemoan too few workers, but none have too many. Some meet regularly to work systematically, while others find it more satisfactory to work individually. A greater number of young people are becoming interested. The Hubbardston chairman writes, "Most gratifying help comes from the Lend a Hand Sunday School Class of girls, who have two correspondents. These girls are not only interested in the work but excited and enthused. This class spirit can be heartily recommended. Let boys and girls become personally acquainted with Cheerful Letter work and active in it. Its influence for good is as great for the writer who takes the initiative as for the one who replies."

A class of small boys in a New York private school pastes cards and scrapbooks for the "sick shut-ups," as they call them. Some of the scrapbooks, in which Hingham still specializes, were made by a Sunday School Class; on the other hand, a man of 75 made several. The Waltham worker who has the largest number of correspondents is herself an invalid, who has not been out of the house for years. Worcester has a worker who has written Cheerful Letters for twenty-two years. An associate member of the Lexington Committee, who is 90 years old, has done up and sent 55 bundles of scraps this year.

The committees' correspondents vary, too. Some prefer to write intensively to only two or three, while others carry on their lists one hundred or more. Some have no regular recipients of reading and cheer but answer such requests as appeal to them in successive *Cheerful Letter* magazines. Many reports stress the advantage of establishing friendly relations with distant acquaintances. The Malden chairman says, "We think it best both for ourselves and our correspondents to be real friends with a few rather than taking on new people." From Marlboro we learn, "I have 12 regular correspondents to each of whom I write monthly a long, friendly letter. I plan that each of my correspondents shall each month receive a package of literature, patchwork pieces, thread, or flower seeds—such articles as are approved by the *Cheerful Letter*. Most of the women on my list have been my friends for years. One signs her letter, 'From your Pal.'" The Hackensack chairman has "found that dropping all formality and calling each other by our first names is a help in sealing a real bond between unseen friends. The less we have had of formality the greater has been the personal interest and affectionate regard."

Some information about individual correspondents is of interest. The crippled boy, who through the kind offices of the Needham chairman has had three years' free treatment at a St. Louis hospital, is much better, is using crutches, and will be discharged well within a short time. Syracuse Branch gave Christine Rea a second summer term at East Radford Teachers' College, from which she graduated with honor. She has been given a full grade position as primary teacher. The correspondent of the North Andover chairman, and her mother and cousin, besides, have joined her Alliance, paying their dues and receiving literature, Christmas and Easter cards from the North. The Virginia correspondent of the chairman from the First Church, Boston, some time ago won a prize offered by the U. S. Department of Agriculture for the most artistic bedroom. She decorated and arranged hers from hints obtained from magazines sent her by *Cheerful Letter* friends. By this means she has been two years to college and has a good position as high school teacher.

After considering such a record as the above, how small seem the problems that beset the worker! Drop from the list the beggar, however worthy, who asks for clothing or money, but do remember that every time one of you breaks the rule and sends such things, you lay yourself and all the rest open to begging letters not only from the recipient but from all the latter's relatives and friends. If today each one of you resolved never again to send to a *Cheerful Letter* correspondent any of the articles banned by the Central Committee, this problem would be solved.

Do not spend time or money upon the people who do not acknowledge your letters and reading matter. There are plenty who will appreciate them enough to do so. On the other hand, do not condemn too harshly those who do not reply immediately. Remember the letters owed you by dear, personal friends, and consider how much more actual effort writing is to these other friends, whose time is very limited. Blame yourself every time for the lack of an answer if your letter did not contain a stamped and self-addressed envelope, or your package a self-addressed postcard. With these others money is very scarce and stamps procurable only at long distances.

The problem of increased postal rates your secretary cannot solve. She can only suggest that 50 pounds or more of boxed books and magazines will go more reasonably, if sent a long distance, by express, and that there are many places near home where reading matter is very welcome, and to which you can carry it by automobile yourself.

That *Cheerful Letter* work is a double blessing is made clear by the correspondent who writes, "I wish you could know what a letter means to one who has mail only once a week and who never sees anybody pass the gate, not even a stray mule," and the chairman who thus unburdens her heart, "My husband died in the winter. It will give me pleasure and satisfaction as well as more courage to continue living without him to put my soul into this work."

Respectfully submitted,

ETHEL LANE HERSEY,

Secretary.

I know not in what metal I have wrought;

Nor whether what I fashion will be thrust
Beneath the clods that hide forgotten thought:
But if it is of gold it will not rust;

And when the time is ripe it will be brought
Into the sun, and glitter through its dust.

—*Eugene Lee-Hamilton.*

BRIDE (at the telephone): "Oh, John, do come home. I've mixed the plugs in some way. The radio is all covered with frost and the electric ice box is singing 'Way out West in Kansas.'"

A FEW days after a farmer had placed his two children in school, a book agent called on him and said, "Now that your children go to school you ought to buy them an encyclopedia."

"Buy them an encyclopedia? Hanged if I do," was his reply. "Let them walk, like I did."—*Farm Life.*

TURNER: "Do you believe in auto suggestion?"

Smith: "Say, there wasn't any suggestion about it at my house! My wife just point blank demanded one!"

WHAT AMERICA MEANS TO ME

A LAND of hope, to me it means
A place for service
To one's fellow man.

A land of promise where one's dreams
Come true for those
Who work and plan.

A land of beauty, too, it seems
As around we see
God's gifts to man.

To have a part in the great scheme,
To help to mold,
To lift the ban.

To mold a Nation where it means
Life, liberty and opportunity
To be an American.

—Mary Pratt Potter.

WHO AM I?

I NEVER was guilty of wrong action. But on my account lives have been lost, trains have been wrecked, ships have gone down at sea, cities have been burned, battles have been lost, and governments have failed.

I never struck a blow nor spoke an unkind word, but because of me homes have been broken up, friends have grown cold, the laughter of little children has ceased, wives have shed bitter tears, brothers and sisters have forgotten, and fathers and mothers have gone broken-hearted to their graves.

I have intended no evil, but because of me talent and genius have come to naught, courtesy and kindness have failed, and the promise of success and happiness has yielded sorrow and disaster.

I have no color except black, no sound but just silence, no cause for my being except myself, no progeny except grief and disaster.

I am Neglect.—*Santa Fé Magazine.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

ITS PURPOSE

To cheer and comfort those who are ill, lonely, or discouraged, through the exchange of letters and by gifts of books and magazines.

To help those who live far from schools, or who wish to continue their studies by means of correspondence with a teacher.

To give to those living far from church some of the helps which churches give. One good sermon or similar article is printed in each number. These sermons are never doctrinal, but present only such simple religious truths and principles as are agreed on by all churches.

WHERE TO WRITE

1. *Letters paying for subscriptions to the paper*, fifty cents a year, should be sent to the Cheerful Letter Exchange, 16 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Checks or postal orders should be made payable to the Cheerful Letter Exchange.

2. *Letters asking for correspondents*, should be sent to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

3. *Letters asking for books, magazines, cards, etc.*, also letters offering to give books and magazines, should be sent to Mrs. Henry R. Austin, 100 Elm Ave., Wollaston, Mass.

4. *Letters asking for help in studying at home* should be sent to Mrs. George O. Sands, Brimble Ave., North Beverly, Mass.

The Home Study Committee has on hand a variety of schoolbooks which may be used by students either at home or in the schoolroom. The aim of the teachers is to help in any study where help is needed. Often this may fit a person for a higher grade of work.

5. *Letters about the establishment of Circulating Libraries* should be sent to Mrs. H. A. Stevens, 26 John St., Brookline, Mass.

A Circulating Library will be started in any small community needing one, if proper location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references can be given. One hundred and fifty-nine libraries are now on our lists.

6. The Secretary of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, Miss Ethel L. Hersey, Hingham, Mass., should receive the more general correspondence from workers on the local committees, or from others interested in the organization and its methods.